# PROVISION FOR the poore, now in penurie.

## OVT OF THE STORE-HOVSE of Gods plentie:

Which they ſhall be ſure to find in all places, that are indued with his graces, to thinke ſeriouſly on this ſentence following.

Pſal. 41. 1.

*Bleſſed is he that conſidereth of the poore, the Lord will deliuer him in the time of trouble.*

Explaned by *H. A.*

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# To the Christian Reader,

in what calling soeuer,

*Grace, &c.*

THe complaint of the poore through penurie in Englande, hath continued long, (good Christian reader) and yet it appeareth their want groweth greater. What should this import? but either they cry not aright themselues, to him that is able & willing to help, or else the bowels of tender compassion are shut vp in such as should relieue them. Touching the poore that crie hard for foode, and finde small supply: the reason is, for that they doe not complaine vnto God of their grieuous sinnes (the verie maine cause of all their calamities:) which if they looke to haue released, and no further increased, they must confesse in maner following. First, that they haue misspent much good time in idle roging vp and downe, and woulde not worke: therefore the Lord doth iustly requite them, that now when they would, they shall not eate (or verie little.) Second, that in the time of abundance, they haue beene great wasters in bibbing and bellycheare: therefore nowe iustly they feele the want thereof. Thirdly, That when God by his messengers, called vpon them to leaue their euill wayes, and serue him better, they would not heare to follow the same: Therfore doth God nowe shut vp his eares, and others also, when they cry for foode. If they would gladly then finde supplie, they must resolue to turne to God quickly, to confesse all their sinnes, to aske him pardon, to promise amendment,

and to pray dayly for increase of his grace, that they may performe the same, then will he shorly send them releefe. To come to those that should relieue the poore, whom God hath indued with wealth and abilitie, whereof some are willing to supply their wants, and do it in some places to Gods glorie and their owne comfor, but others (alas) are too hard hearted, vnwilling almost to part with any thing (albeit they richly abound with all things, (and they may bee proued to haue bin makers of poore) vnto whō I speak in the name of the Lord, *That if they still refuse to heare and helpe the needie when they crie for succour, they shall crie themselues and not bee heard when they would faineſt speed.* I wish thē therfore in time to shewe mercie (as this booke informeth them) least when they looke not for it, they finde strict iudgement without any mercie: for shall the Lord Iesus stand at the doore (in his needfull members) and will they not releeue him that came to saue them? Then shall they bee reiected at the last great day into eternall torments. Lay this to your hearts ye rich men of the world, and open your eares and purses to the poore, whilst God giueth space and offereth you grace, least when you would haue it, you cannot finde it. If I could my selfe as well remoue their wants (as *Ioseph* preuented the like in Egypt) I should not thus sue for succor at your hands.

*Pron.* 21. 13

*Iam.* 2. 13.

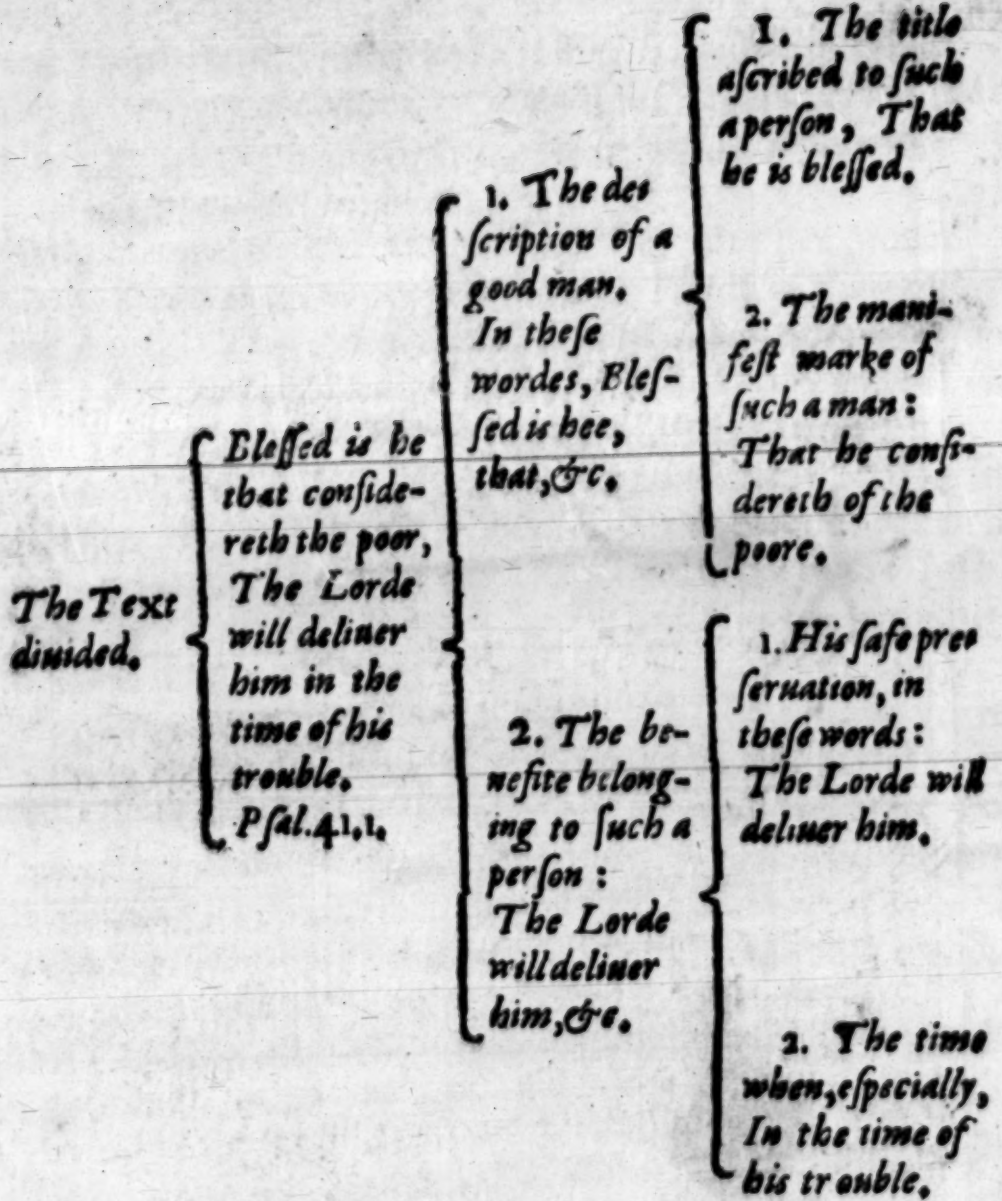
*Mat.* 25. *ch.*

*Gen.* 41. *ch.*

The Lord open your hearts to extende compassion, that in the ende you may find consolation. So be it.

*Your poore welwiller,*

Hen. Arth.




In the handling of which points, verie profitable instructions will appeare concerning the poor, how they may bee relieued this deare yeare in all places, without surcharging any person.

# Prouiſion for the poore

## now in penurie, out of the Storehouſe *of Gods plentie.*

Bleſſed is he that conſidereth of the poore, The Lorde will deliuer him in the time of his trouble. *Pſal.* 41.1

THere is no dutie of Chriſtianitie more commaunded or commended in holy ſcripture, then Loue out of a pure heart vnfeyned, becauſe it hath relation to both the tables of gods law and therefore is tearmed by Chriſt himſelfe (the fountaine of true loue) The verie badge to know his diſciples from Sathans bondſlaues (who delight euer in malice and miſchiefe) neither can there bee any thing wherein the loue of Chriſtians may appeare more plainely, then in releeuing one another in their neceſſitie. In diſcharging which dutie, the moſt able and willing are ſlowe inough, and many faire profeſſors murmur thereat, as Iudas did at Marie Magdalen, who found openly a great default with her, for pouring a box of precious Oyle, vppon the bleſſed head of Ieſus, (though ſhe did it dutifully, to prepare him to his burial) pretending good will vnto the poore, ỹ it might haue bin ſolde & giuen vnto them (not that indeed he ſought their ſupply)

*Ioh.* 13.15. *cha.*

*Ephe.* 4.2. 15.

*Mat.* 26.6 13.

but intended to haue it to his owne vse, because he was a theefe
Ioh 13.3.9. and bare the bag, as Christ reporteth of him, and that the woman had wrought a good worke on him: saying further, They should haue the poore at all times with them, to helpe them (if
Mar. 14. they would) giuing such to vnderstand that found so great
3.9. fault with Maries fact, that they made a great shew to relieue the poore, but when they should seeke for succour vnto them, they would be then slow inough to sustaine them: which amongst many is a common corruption in these daies, rather to find fault at others well doing, in giuing of almes, then to bee liberall that way themselues, to giue godalmes vnto others. To redresse which default (the poore in all places being in penurie) I haue vndertaken to be their Solicitour, vnto all manner of persons, which ought in equitie either to supply them, or to prouide that such as make default (being well able) may bee compelled thereunto by further authoritie from the Almightie, if this gentle motion in the words precedent will not preuaile, which heere I will repeate and explane vnto them, (by Gods assistance)

A common default in these daies.

The author the poores Solicitor.

*Blessed is he that considereth of the poore, the Lord will deliuer him in the time of his trouble.*

IN this parcell of holy Scripture we are to obserue especially two parts.

1 First the description of a good man or woman in these words expressed, Blessed is he that considereth of the poore.

2 Second, the benefit belonging to such a person, that is to say, The Lord will deliuer him in the time of his trouble.

In the description of this good man, we are to remember two other points.

1 First, the title ascribed vnto him, That he is (blessed)

2 Second, the manifest marke of such a man, That he considereth of the poore.

Concerning the benefit belonging to such a man, wee are to meditate

uerdate of these two points also.

1 First, His safe preseruation, contained in these words, The Lord will deliuer him.

2 Second, The time when especially, *viz.* In the time of his trouble.

To begin with the first point, and proceede in the particulars, where the kingly Prophet Dauid saith: Blessed is hee that considereth, &c. His meaning is not, that such a good man onely is blessed, but such a woman also, for in this place Man signifieth mankinde, that is, both sexes, man and woman. As our Sauiour Christ in generall tearmes saith: Blessed are the mercifull, naming neither man nor woman, but compriseth them both within the compasse of true blessednesse, (if they be mercifull) *Mat.*5.7.

Both kinds blessed.

Moreouer, though in the description of this godly person, or any other in vsuall speech, the title is euer set downe before, to moeue others to better attention of that which followeth, yet hauing relation vnto the qualities of that person, it must in order follow the same, and be handled the latter, for in due proceeding, the case standeth thus: He that considereth the poore, he is blessed. As if the Prophet should say, whosoeuer would know one speciall marke (amongst others) of a blessed man, hee that considereth the poore is such a one. In which short sentence we are to obserue fiue especiall points.

The first in vse, the second in order.

Six parts concerning the poore.

1 What kinde of poore the Prophet here meaneth.
2 What it is, rightly to consider of them.
3 What persons rightly consider the poore.
4 To produce some examples of the poore considerers.
5 The double effect of considering the poore.
6 Their dangerous estate that consider not the poore.

To begin first with those poore whom the Prophet here propoundeth to bee considered of: in a word they bee all sorts of poore good and bad, that are in any kinde of necessitie: which may be manifested by Saint Pauls words: Doo good to all, especially to those of the houshold of faith: containing both *Gal.*6.10.

sorts within the compasse of our compassion, by the which occasion, these circumstaunces concerning the poore are to bee remembred.

Six circumstances cõcerning the poore.

1 The seuerall kinds of poore to be holpen.
2 That none ought to be idle, nor yet to begge.
3 Why God will haue the poore amongst vs.
4 What prouision is made for them by law.
5 Her Maiesties continuall care for their supplie.
6 What meanes to relieue them, is put in practice.

Two sorts of poore.

Concerning these seuerall kinds of poore, that now especially are to be considered of, may wel be diuided into these two sorts.

1 The impotent poore.
2 The poore able to worke.

The impotent poore foure sorts.

The impotent poore, (though many in number) may well be conteyned within these foure kinds, all wanting wherewith to relieue themselues.

1 Aged persons past their worke,
2 Lamed persons vnable to worke.
3 Little infants without parents.
4 Poore sicke persons during their weakenesse.

To be relieued in the whole.

All these of necessitie, must be maintained in the whole, (if they haue not of their owne towards their supply) for touching the sicke poore, (though they haue some goods, gotten by sore labour in their health) yet I see no reason, that they should sell the Cowe which giues the children milke, nor the tooles they worke with, nor any needfull thing belonging to their maintenance: all which things in compassion are to be spared, as the lawes of Moses prouided in that case.

*Dent.* 24.

Concerning the poore that are able to worke, they may be diuided into these two sorts.

1 Such as may earne their whole maintenance.
3 Such as must be relieued in part,

The poore that are able to liue by their labour, are of three sortes.

1 Able to worke of these sorts.

1 Such as are willing to take paines, and cannot get worke.

2 Such

2 Such as are yong and lustie, yet vnwilling to labour.

3 Such as are committed for some offences, and haue not wherewith to be maintained.

The poore not able to liue by their labour, and yet fitte and willing to take paines, are of three sorts also. 2 Willing to worke three sorts.

1 Orphaned children aboue seuen yeares olde.

2 Such as bee ouercharged with children, hauing nothing to maintaine them but their hand labour.

3 Such as fall to decay in their workes, by reason of their yeares, weakenesse or infirmities.

All which ought to be relieued in part, as their necessitie shal require.

The second circumstaunce touching the poore, is, to prouide that none liue idlely that can labour, nor any begge that are vnable: for both those persons staine our profession by their bad examples. 3 None to begge or be idle.

But some will obiect, was not Lazarus a begger, lying dayly at the rich mans dore, and yet recommended in holy Scripture to be one of the redeemed in Iesus Christ. An obiectiō

The example of Lazarus is commended for his patience (not for his begging) being onely constrained thereunto, or else to famish. So small regarde then was had of the poore, that were vnable to worke: for, if begging had been lawfull, Christ would haue sayde, You shall haue Beggers allwayes with you, in stead of the Poore. Answere. *Mar.* 14.7

The strangers in London (if report be true) may be a patterne in these respects to all our English nation, for they are so carefull to keepe their Countrey people, both from idlenesse, and begging, that such as can worke, neither want worke, nor yet wages, and so soone as any fall in decay, their state is imparted vnto their company, and then commonly, they abstaine one meale on the next Lordes day, and giue the price thereof towards the parties maintenance. And their care in this case was so great in the primitiue Church, that manie selde their liuing to maintaine their poore Brethren, and kept a *Act.* 4. 34 37. How the strangers in Londō prouide for their poore

1. Cor. 16. 1.5. The care in the primitiue church of the poor.

cuſtome euerie Lordes day to lay vp ſome money towardes the releife of poore ſtraungers, when a collection ſhould bee made for them: ſo vnwilling they were, that any Chriſtian ſhould begge in thoſe dayes, to the diſhonour of Chriſt and his Goſpel.

3 Why the poore are ſcattered amongſt vs.

The thirde circumſtaunce touching the poore, is to ſearch out the cauſe why God hath left the poore amongſt vs, (ſcattered as it were in all countries) which may ſeeme to bee in two reſpects, partly to trie our loue vnto them, and partly to approue our faith vnto God, that he may bleſſe vs, as Moſes declareth after this maner.

*Deut.* 15. 1.18.

If anie of thy brethren be faine poore, in the Citie, (as yée ſhall haue the poore alwayes with you) yée ſhall lende and giue him (as neceſſitie requyreth, without any grudging (not looking for it againe) that the Lorde thy God may proſper thy proceedings.

Three ſtatutes for the poore.

The fourth circumſtaunce concerning the poore, is to conſider, howe the lawes of this lande hath prouided for them, which conſiſt in three Statutes made to that ende ſince her Maieſties reigne.

1 The firſt, made in the fourteenth yeere of her highneſſe reigne, intituled, An Act for the punishing of all roguiſh vagabonds.

2 The ſecond, made in the eighteenth yeare of her highneſſe reigne, intituled, An Act for ſetting the poore on worke, &c.

3 The third, made in the fiue and thirtith yeare of her highneſſe reigne, intituled, An Act for the neceſſarie releife of ſouldiers and mariners.

1 Statute, how rogues ſhould be punished.

In the firſt Act, there is reſtraynt, that none ſhall wander abroad without licence vpon ſpeciall occaſion: all other vagarant perſons able to worke, to be taken and punished as Rogues and Vagabonds, The firſt offence, to be ſtocking and whipping: The ſecond, to be burnt in the eare: and the third to be taken and hanged as felons.

The

# for the poore.

The second act tendeth, to set the poore on worke, that there should be houses of correction builded in all countreyes, and stocks in money prouided, to set all the poore (that can worke) or lacke worke, to spinne, knit, or such like, (and all the impotent to be otherwise relieued by weekely contribution.) If any refuse to worke that are able, to be punished with want of meat (as the apostle warneth) with stocking, whipping, or otherwise, at the gouernours discretion. 2 How the poore should be set on worke. 2. *Thes.* 3. 10.

The third act prouideth, that all manner of Souldiers and mariners that fal to be maimed in her maiesties warres, shall be maintained honestly in their owne Countreyes (by generall coassments) according to the places they serued in before, bringing due testimonie thereof, from their generall or Captaine. 3 Statutes for releefe of Souldiers.

If these three statutes were duely put in execution, (according to the true meaning thereof, there neither could nor would be so many poore, nor so great penurie, as there is at this day. VVant of execution, &c.

The fift circumstance concerning the poore, to moue our compassion towards their sustenance, is the consideration of her maiesties most gracious regard and forwardnesse, to haue their wants supplyed in all parts, appearing plainely in these two points chiefly. 5 Her maiesties christian care for the poore in two respects.

1 First in releasing her owne right by custome for the bringing in of corne from forraine kingdomes, to serue the want throughout her dominions (which will amount to no small summe, both to incourage her merchants to venture, & to bring downe the price to releeue the poore, which (God be thanked) it hath done already in many places. 1 In releasing her custome.

2 Second, in causing her maiesties most honorable councell, to direct theyr letters in her owne name, to the two Archbishops, of Canturbury and Yorke, to signifie her pleasure to all their brethren in both prouinces, that Wednesday suppers should be spared of the more able, & wholly conuerted towards the 2 The councels letters sent in the poores behalfe, by hir maiesties meanes.

the due releefe of the poore.

The councels care for releeuing the poore.

I may not omit heere the christian perswasions of the Lords of the councell, in their godly letters to the said Archbishop, to moue them by all good meanes to seeke the maintenance of the poore, and withall in setting downe necessarie direction to all the Iustices in this Realme, for the restraint of wasteful expences, and due prouision to serue the markets, with corne in all parts (so much as is possible) to procure releefe for her maiesties people, that none might perish by this great penurie.

Twelue pence a time for absence from diuine seruice.

Whereunto if we adde the forfaiture of 12. pence for euerie houlholders absence from Church (man and woman) forenoone and after, sunday and holiday (according to the statute) without sufficient cause alledged) to be duely collected by Churchwardens and others appointed to that end, with the like regard for Wednsday suppers: there would be sufficient releefe for the poore in all places (if corne were much deerer) as by indifferent computation will appeare. If we estimate the price of seuerable persons (their suppers only) towards the releefe of one poore body, that could not worke.

VVhat meanes to releeue the poore is put in practise.

The first circumstance concerning the poore, is to search out how those prouisions made by Law for their due releefe, is put in practise: that is in few words, whether the impotent be prouided for, whether the able to labour haue worke and wages to liue vpon, and whether all idle vagabondes that are able and will not worke, be punished for example sake (according to the statutes before expressed)

Some good townes do prouide for the poore.

It may be spoken to the praise of some well disposed people in some good townes, within some parts of her maiesties dominions, that a man passing through the same shall see not one begger asking any almes, (except one or two that keepe the common box, according to the order) to take the benevolence of trauellers and strangers: so well are the statutes obserued in those places.

The poore of VVakefield.

For the towne of Wakefield, where my abode is, (though the poore be many and needy) yet thus much in truth I may speak,

to

to my knowledge, that if any be pinched with penurie, the default especially resteth in themselues, though some other persons can not be excused. For, (to the prayse of God bee it spoken) there is not onelie a house of correction, according to the Lawe, but withall, certaine stockes of money put forth into honest Clothiers handes, who are bounde with good sureties, to set all the able poore to worke, after fiue pence, or fiue pence a pound of woll spinning (as they shall deserue) if they will fetch it.

The able want no worke if they will.

For the impotent poore in euery streete, they haue beene considered of, (by the most able and forwarde men of that Towne) and a generall ceassement voluntarie made for their supplie weekelie, which by confirmation of her Maiesties Iustices, is still kept of euerie able householder, besides the Wednesdayes Suppers, for the which the Church-wardens take paynes accordingly, wherein if euerie one woulde discharge that dutie required of her Maiestie, to let the poore haue the full benefite of their sayde Suppers, there should not one person haue cause to begge there for all this deare yeare. As for the yonger sort, fitte to learne trades and occupations, there is order taken to put them to apprentillshippe, or otherwise to seruice.

A weekely collection for the impotent.

Hauing thus farre onely made declaration of the seuerall kindes of poore, and what prouision hath beene made for them by Actes of Parliament, and now of late by her Maiesties good meanes, and speciall direction from the Lordes of her Counsaile: Let vs nowe proceede to the second speciall poynt of the former fiue.

Second poynt.

What it is rightly to consider of the poore.

Concerning this poynt, there be fiue propositions of speciall importaunce to be considered of.

Six poynts of consideration.

1 The proceeding causes of so manie poore in all Countreyes.

2 That God might haue made our estate lyke vnto theirs.

3 That we should do to them as we would be done vnto.
4 Why we all ought to helpe to relieue them.
5 Those places of scripture tending to compassion.
6 How their present want may be relieued.

To begin with the first proposition touching the proceeding causes of many poore in all Countreys, though some impute the same to the dearth of graine, and the occasion thereof to vnseasonable weather, especially in harueſt time, by tempestuous winds which shoake out the corne when it would haue beene shorne, yet must we search further from whence those windes came, and the cause thereof, which were the proceeding causes indeede.

1 The proceeding causes of the poore.

For the former of these last causes, all windes and ill weather procede directly from the iustice of God, (as many places of the holie Scripture prone the same) especially in the Prophecie of Amos, where it is sayde, There is no euill befalles to any Citie, but the Lord hath done it, (meaning by euill, all maner of afflictions.

Gods iustice.

*Amos* 3.6.

Concerning the latter, the Scripture likewise doth make mention, that the sinnes of all people do prouoke Gods iustice, to plague vs sundrie wayes, as all men may perceyue in perusing the Prophets (especially the booke of Deuteronomie, and Leuiticus.)

Mens sins prouoking Gods iustice.

*Leu.* 26.
*Deut.* 28.

The due premeditation whereof, will vrge vs to consider of those particular sinnes, which procure Gods iustice to punish vs with penurie.

1 Partly proceeding from the poore themselues.
2 But more especially from the poore makers.

The proceeding sinnes from the poore themselues, whereby they prouoke the Lord to pinch them, are these six especially.

Six sinnes proceeding from the poore.

1 First, their misspending of former times in idlenesse, when they might haue wrought.

2 Secondly, their wilfull wasting of their goods when they had them, in bibbing and belly-cheare.

3 Thirdly, their impacient bearing of their present want, complaining

complaining often without cause.

4 Fourthly, their dayly repining at others prosperitie, to haue so much, and they so little.

5 Fiftly, their banning and cursing, when they are not serued as themselues desire.

6 Sixtly, their seldome repairing to their parish Churches, to heare and learne their duties better: all which must be amended, if they would haue their wants supplyed.

The proceeding sinnes from the poore makers, wherby they prouoke Gods iustice to plague vs with this present penurie, in all places, are many and grieuous, especially ten, which may be tearmed the breeders of the poore. The poore makers sins ten in number.

1 All excessiue proude persons in apparell.
2 The vnmeasurable wasters of meate and drinke.
3 The importable oppression of many Landlords.
4 The vnconscionable extortion of all vsurers.
5 The vnsatiable couetousnesse in corne-mongers.
6 The wilfull wrangling in law matters.
7 The immoderate abuse of gamming in all Countreys.
8 The discharging of seruants and apprentises.
9 The generall abuse of all Gods benefites.
10 The want of execution of good lawes and statutes.

All which must needs increase the poore, and the increase of poore must likewise procure penurie, and scarcitie in all places, as by diligent examining the former particulars, will appeare plainely to the view of all persons.

To begin first with all proud persons, that keepe no moderation in their apparell, neither in cost nor change, and commonly (farre aboue their calling) must not their maintenance proue great sums of money? It may be more then either their rents or getting will extend, which must needs inforce them, either to racke their tenants by fines, or else to run on score in their creditors bookes, till they sell them one lordship after an other, and then must the tenants pay for their pride: and will not this dealing make many poore? 1 All proud persons.

2 Al prodigal persons

The second sort of poore makers, be all such kinde of prodigall persons, as riotously waste their goods and substance, in surfetting and drunkennesse, in banketting and bellicheare, day after day deuouring more meate and drinke into one belie, then woulde well serue two or three persons: and must not this dealing make all graine and victuals the scanter, which in the ende must needes pinch the poore, through want of the same?

3 Oppressing landlords.

The thirde sort of poore makers, are all vnreasonable oppressing Landlordes, and that by three hookes, either by turning their Tenaunts out of doores, to enlarge their Demaines with their tenements, or inhauncing of their rents, or else in making them sell all their goods, that they are not able to till their land, but let it out to others: and must not this dealing make many poore?

4 Extorting vsurers.

The fourth sort of poore makers, are all kinde of Vsurers, whether it bee in money or wares, who deale so vnconcionably with men in these dayes, that they are not ashamed to extort twentie, thirtie, or fortie pounds in the hundreth, so they can defraude the lawe: and will not this dealing make many poore?

5 Couetous corne-mongers.

The fifth sort of poore makers, are all sortes of couetous Corne-mongers, who commonly keepe one yeares store before hande, closely laide vp in their Arkes or Garners, and rather then they will shew themselues so loving to bring it to the Market, to make corne cheaper, can be contented to see their neighbours famished: and must not this dealing increase their penurie?

6 Wilfull wranglers in lawe matters.

The sixth sort of poore makers, are all wilfull wranglers in Lawe matters, consuming their substaunce in wreaking their wicked willes one of another (and sometymes brether with brother, about verie trifles) as I coulde name a couple that might once haue beene accorded vnder twentie Nobles, within this fiue yeares, and nowe haue quite spoyled one the other, with suites in lawe: and must not

this

not this dealing increase the poore?

The seauenth sort of poore makers, are all immoderate vnthrift gamesters, (at dice and cards specially) which (if they be lawful) ought onely to bee vsed for recreation, to make them more apt to walke in their vocation, and not to make gamening an occupation to get their liuing thereby, (and that for the most parte to others destruction, their wiues and children) losing possibly more in one night, then they can recouer all the yeere after, and force great men sometimes to sell whole Lordshippes to satisfie their lusts: and will not this dealing make many poore? 7 Vnthriftie gamesters.

The eight sort of poore makers, are such, as vnlawfully dismisse their Seruants and apprentises before their tearme end, and breake vp housekeeping for sauing of charges, being well able to maintaine them still: and will not this dealing increase the poore? 8 Discharging of seruants.

The ninth sort of poore makers, is the generall abuse of all Gods benefits (almost in all estates) very few keeping any moderation, besides our vnthankfulnesse, which must needes increase the prices of all things, so as the meaner sort can hardly gette maintenance: and must not this dealing make the more poore? 9 Abuses of Gods benefits.

The tenth sort of poore makers, is the want of execution of those Lawes and orders made for their prouision, which fault resteth in Magistrates and officers appoynted to that ende, and in many ministers, who ought publikely and priuately to reproue abuses, and put all persons in minde of their duties, yet either they cannot, or will not performe the same, whereby the most do liue in disorder: and will not this dealing increase the poore? 10 VVant of due execution of good lawes.

Now if one of these poore makers may breede many poore, (as the oppression of Tenants by one cruell Landlorde) howe many will they breede all tenne together? I thinke they will fall out to bee innumerable, namely if wee consider howe many such poore makers euery countrey hath, yea euery towne

in one respect or other, (for what towne is there but hath some gamesters, alestakes, and such like, that daily increase the poore) which they would not doo if they did but often thinke of this one point,

*Luke 16.2.* That euery person at the last day, shall giue an account of his owne stewardship. &c.

The Lords proceeding in iudgement.

The meditation hereof, will make them more carefull to walke in Gods feare, if they looke at that day to finde his fauour, when euery person shall bee adiudged according to the vsing or abusing their gifts, to the helping or hindering of the poore (as Christ the great iudge shall then proceede with them) receiuing the mercifull into his kingdome, reiecting the merciles into hell torments, to be damned for euer with Sathan and his Angels, except they iudge themselues in time (to preuent the iudgement of the Lord) in maner following.

*Mat. 15.*

How all poore makers should iudge themselues.

1. How all proude persons should iudge themselues.

The vaineglorious person may thus thinke, I haue procured Gods iustice to plague vs, by spending so much in change of apparrell (aboue my calling) and so little or nothing to relæue the poore: if I should holde on this course I shall bee condemned, therefore (by Gods grace) I will hereafter go more soberly in my apparrell, to doo the more good to such as neede the same, that Christ may receiue me into his kingdome.

2. How all prodigall persons should iudge themselues.

The prodigall wretch may say in like sort, I haue procured Gods plagues vpon vs, by wasting much money in bibbing and bellycheere, that others now do feele the want therof, therefore (by his grace) I will be more sparing in time to come, that the poore may haue more plentie, and I escape damnation which I haue deserued.

How al oppressing landlords should iudge themselues.

The oppressing Landlord may likewise say, I haue procured Gods iustice to plague vs, in spoyling of so many of their goodes and liuings by incrochings vppon them, by inhauncing their rents, and by exceeding fines, whereby I haue brought them to the beggers staffe, therefore (by Gods grace) I will no more doo so, but hereafter deale more mercifully with them, least I be damned with deuils in hell.

The

The deuouring vsurer may say in like sort, I haue procured the Lord to plague vs, by my extorting much money from many, and getting my goods with polling and pilling of other persons, and thereby haue brought them into pouertie: but (by Gods grace) hereafter I will leaue that trade, (and rather seeke to make restitution) otherwise I cannot inherit Gods kingdome. 4. How al Vsurers should iudge themselues. *Psal.* 15.

The couetous cornemonger may likewise say, I haue prouoked Gods iustice to plague vs, being a meane to inhaunce the price of all graine, by withholding my corne from the market this deere yeere, and so haue procured the poore to curse me, but henceforth (God willing) I will helpe to bring downe the price againe, least I be cursed for euermore. 5. Howe al cornemongers should iudge thē selues. *Prou.* 11. 26.

The wilfull wrangler may say in like sort, I haue procured Gods plague vpon vs, by wastefull misspending much money in lawe, to my owne great dammage and others also, which would haue done much good to the poore, towardes theyr releefe this deere yeere. But (by Gods grace) I will hereafter further the same, by leauing law suits, and liue in charitie, that Christ may receiue me into his kingdome. 6. Howe al wilful wrāglers in suits should iudge themselues.

The vnmeasurable gamester may likewise say, I haue prouoked the Lord to plague vs by my wilfull wasting much time and money by immoderate gamening, which would haue holpen the poore very well: but (by Gods grace) hereafter I will leaue that lewd course, that I may spare the more to releeue them, and so (through his mercies) come to saluation. 7. Howe all wastefull gamesters should iudge themselues.

The niggardly house keeper may say in like sort, I haue procured Gods plagues vpon vs, by putting away my Seruants and apprentises this deere yeere, (to spare charge onely through couetousnesse) whereby the poores want hath bene the greater: but (by Gods grace) I will hereafter bee me more liberall, to releeue their necessitie, that I may inherit eternall felicitie. 8 How al bad housekeepers should iudge themselues.

Yea that enioyeth his ease and pleasure, may likewise say, I haue prouoked the Lord to plague vs, by my vnthankfulnesse and idle expences, more then I layde out to releeue the poore, 9. How al easeful persons should iudge thē selues.

poore, in most places almost pined through penurie. But (by Gods good grace) I will hereafter set lesse by my delights, and more to helpe the needie (as God requireth) that I may bee receiued into his heauenly tabernacle, when this life is ended.

How all careless magistrates should iudge themselues.

The careless magistrate or minister may say, I haue procured the Lord to plague vs, both by my owne default of duty, and little regarde to call vppon others to looke to their charges, towards the releefe of the poore this deare yeere. But (by Gods grace) I will be more carefull hencefoorth of my dutie, and see them supplyed, so as none (through my default) shall be famished, that I may shew my selfe blessed of Christ, both in this world and that to come.

If euery one would mend one all should prosper the better.

If all able persons to whome God hath giuen the gifts of this world, would thus iudge themselues and amend that is amisse, (as we are all bounde) the poore should then be well prouided for in all places, and God be so pleased with our compassion to his needie members, as we should procure (from his liberall bountifulnesse) more plentifull increases of all things needfull, to fill our mouthes full of his deserued praises, for his mercifull proceedings with his poore seruants, that depende vpon his prouidence.

2 point of consideration.

The second cheefe point that all able persons are to consider of, is onely thus much, that God might haue made our estate like vnto the poore: that his more bountifull dealing with vs, should open our hearts to be so much the more beneficiall to them, or else wee shew our selues vnworthy of his blessings, and deserue in iustice to be depriued of them.

Marke this well.

3 Point of consideration.

The third cheefe point that all able persons are to consider of, is the wordes of our Sauiour, That we should do to others as we would be doone vnto: which implyeth thus much, that as our selues would wish to bee holpen in our neede, so should wee be readie to helpe all others in their necessities (so much as we may) then are wee assured God will supply vs in our necessities.

*Mat.* 5. 12.

The

The fourth chiefe poynt that all persons are to consider of, is, the especiall causes moouing, why we shoulde bee carefull to sustain the poore: which may be contained within these foure kindes. 4 Point of consideration.

1 God hath commaunded in his holy word, that we should be carefull of their sustentation.

2 They bee our owne flesh and naturall kinsfolkes, both by creation, and regeneration, and left amongst vs to trie our compassion.

3 Christ Jesus shed his precious blood for them, as well as for vs.

4 They be our fellowe heyres, of Christ his most blessed and euerlasting kingdome.

The often and diligent premeditation of these few poyntes, should lead vs all to this consideration, that if we tender Gods holy commaundement, if we haue any loue or compassion in vs, if wee make account of Christes precious blood, or if wee our selues looke to inherite his kingdome, after this life ended, then must wee bee mindfull to relieue his members, that is, the poore, who at this present are in great penurie, in most places, and are in daunger to bee famished, without helpe. Mark these points well *Mat*, 25.

5 The fift chiefe point: that all able persons are to consider of, are those perswading places of Scripture, which do most vrge vs, to the due relieuing of the poore in all places, whereof I will onely set downe twelue, vnder which all the rest may be contained. 5 Point of consideration. Twelue places of scripture.

1 Cast thy bread vpon the waters, and after many dayes thou shalt be sure to finde it. *Eccle*. 11, 1.

2 He that giueth vnto the poore, lendeth vnto the Lord, who will recompence it in due season. *Pro*. 19, 17. *and* 28, 27.

3 To do good, and to distribute vnto the needy forget not, for with such sacrifices God is pleased. *Rom*. 12, 31. *Heb*. 13, 16.

4 He that giueth not sparingly vnto the poore, God will giue liberally vnto him, for he loueth a chearfull giuer. 2. *Cor*. 9.

Pſal.112.9. 5 He that diſtributeth vnto the poore, his righteouſneſſe ſhall remaine for euer.

Luke 14. 13,14. 6 Call the poore, the lame and the blind to thy Table, ſo ſhalt thou bee bleſſed of the Lord, and bee recompenced for the ſame at the laſt day.

Luk. 12.33 7 Giue almes to the needie, ſo ſhall yee get a treaſure in heauen that neuer ſhall decay.

Pſal.41,1 8 Bleſſed is he that conſidereth the poore, the Lorde will deliuer him in the time of his trouble.

1.Ioh.3,17 9 He that hath this worlds good, and ſeeth his brother want, and ſhutteth vp his compaſſion from him, howe dwelleth the loue of God in him.

Pro.21,13. 10 He that ſtoppeth his eares at the cry of the poore, ſhal crie himſelfe and not be heard.

Matt.5,7. 11 Bleſſed are the merciſull, for they ſhall be ſure to obtaine mercie.

Iam.2,13 12 There ſhalbe iudgement without mercy, to thoſe that ſhew no mercy, but merciſulnes reioiceth againſt iudgment.

Conſider of this concluſion. There is no heart ſo hard (if it be not of flint) but will relent, and ſhewe ſome compaſſion to relieue the poore, vpon the perusing of theſe places, if he either take God to be iuſt, or merciſull, to performe his promiſes: or beleeue there is a hel and a heauen, after this life ended, where they ſhall remaine in ſorrow or ioy that ſhall be endleſſe. For all theſe exhortations alledged, are within the compaſſe of Canonicall Scripture, and written for our inſtruction, as by examining them in their particulars will appeare, and by application become more profitable.

Rom.15,4

1 Place. Eccle. 11.1. Applied. The firſt place: Caſt thy bread vpon the waters, &c. are Salomons ſpeaches, the wiſeſt king that euer was, and a figure of Chriſt, where water ſignifieth the poore, (as weake as water.) Now he doth aſſure ſuch merciſull men, that their almes ſo beſtowed ſhall not be loſt. What able perſon then but will giue the more, if he truſt Salomons words to be true, that himſelfe ſhall finde it.

The

The ſecond place: He that giueth vnto the poore ſhal not lacke, &c. are Salomons alſo, which ſhould encourage all able perſons to giue the more, becauſe thereby they ſhall procure the Lord to bleſſe their proviſion, that they ſhould not want: becauſe he hath promiſed to recompence the ſame, (if it were but a cuppe of colde water giuen in good will) accounting the ſame as done to himſelfe, ſo well hee lyketh the workes of charitie. 2 place. *Pro.* 28.27 Applied. *Pro.* 29.17. *Matt.* 10. 42.

The third place: To do good to thoſe that ſtand in neede forget not, for with ſuch ſacrifices God is pleaſed. The Apoſtles ſpeaches: wherein we ſee how the Lord accounteth of ſuch workes (as ſacrifices) acceptable in his ſight, which ſhould moue all able men to double their almes, if they deſire to pleaſe ẏ lord. 3 place. *Heb.* 13. 16 Applied.

The fourth place: He that giueth liberally vnto the poore, God will giue bountifully vnto him: the Apoſtles ſpeeches alſo. And further, that God loueth ſuch a perſon. Which muſt needes moue able perſons to giue freely to the poore, if they eyther tender their owne benefite, or to ſhewe themſelues to be ſuch as God loueth. 4 place. 2. *Cor.* 9. Applied.

The fifth place: He that diſtributeth vnto the poore, his righteouſneſſe ſhall remaine for euer, are the wordes of the Prophet Dauid, which will enforme all able perſons thus much, that if they deſire to be accounted, and continue righteous in Gods ſight for euer, then muſt they of neceſſitie be liberall diſtributers vnto the poore, according to their ſeuerall wants. 5 place. *Pſal.* 112. 9. Applied.

The ſixt place: Call the poore, &c. to thy table, and thou ſhalt be bleſſed, and recompenced for the ſame, at the reſurrection of the iuſt. These be the wordes of our Sauiour Jeſus, which ſhould bee as a ſpurre to all rich perſons, to pricke them forward in giuing of their almes, if they take Chriſt to be euer faithfull in performing promiſe. 6 place. *Luke* 14. 13. 14. Applied.

The ſeuenth place: Giue almes to the needie, ſo ſhall ye get a treaſure in heauen, that neuer ſhall decay. These be ẏ words of our ſauiour alſo, which of all other ſhould moue worldly rich 7 place. *Luk.* 12. 33. Applied.

Applied. men, to liberall almes giuing, that they may get great store of treasure in the world to come, as they haue in this worlde, if they take Christ to be true of his promise.

8 place. The eight place: Blessed is he that considereth the poore,
*Psal.* 41.1. the Lord will deliuer him in the time of his trouble. The
Applied. words of Dauid the kingly Prophet, which must needes perswade all those able persons, that knowe they haue beene, or shall be in trouble, to be beneficiall vnto the poore, if themselues desire to find any comfort in their distresses.

9 place. The ninth place: He that hath this worlds good, and helpeth not his brother, whom he knoweth to want, how dwelleth the loue of God in him? (meaning, it is impossible.) The
*Iohn.* 3.17. words of S. Iohn whom Christ loued so dearely, which should
Applied. prouoke rich men to grow rich dayly in the works of mercie, if
*Iohn* 4.30 they would shew themselues, either to loue God, or to haue the loue of God dwelling in them.

10 place. The tenth place: He that stoppeth his eare at the crie of
*Prou.* 21.13 the poore, shall crie himselfe and not be heard. The words of
Applied. Salomon a figure of Christ which should inforce rich men to listen well to the crie of the poore, and helpe to relieue them, or else they shall one day crie themselues, and not be heard, which assuredly will once come to passe.

11 place. The eleuenth place: Blessed are the mercifull, for they shall
*Mat.* 5.7. obtaine mercie, The words of our Sauiour Iesus also, which
Applied. should allure men to shewe compassion vnto the needie (especially the wealthyer sort, that haue gotten theyr goods by indirect meanes) if they looke that God shoulde shewe them mercie for theyr sinnes, in that respect, when they sue for the same.

12 place. The twelfth place: There shall bee iudgement without
*Iam.* 2.13 mercie, to such as shew no mercy, &c The words of S. Iames
Applied. the Apostle of Christ, which may be called the whip corde reason, to vrge and compell all able persons to performe dayly the
The whip cord reason workes of mercie, and neuer to bee wearie in doing so well, if they would not exclude themselues from mercie, at the

last

laſt iudgement day, when they ſhall moſt ſtand in néed therof.

But to confirme the ſame of certaintie, that the mercileſſe ſhall then want mercie, and cannot come by the ſame, let all ſuch perſons marke betime the manner of Chriſts proceeding with them. Departe from me (ye curſed) into euerlaſting fire, &c. For I was an hungred (in my needy members) and ye gaue me no meate: I thirſted, and ye gaue me no drinke: I was a ſtranger, and ye lodged me not: I was naked, and ye clothed me not: I was ſicke and in priſon, and ye viſited me not. Thus euen for their want of performing the workes of charity (as the bowels of compaſſion ſhould compell them thereunto) they ſhall be condemned to euerlaſting torments. *Mat. 25. 41. 46.* Chriſts maner in proceeding againſt the mercileſſe.

The firſt point of conſideration, for all able perſons to thinke vppon, is, how the poore may and muſt be releeued, if we will ſhew our ſelues to be true Chriſtians, or euer looke that Chriſt ſhould comfort vs at our laſt ending, when death ſhall arreſt vs, to carrie vs either to ioy or paine, and that euerlaſting. 6. point of conſideration howe the poore may bee ſupplied.

The ſerious conſideration therefore of theſe points is moſt néedfull: for, though we lay open the naked eſtate of all poore people neuer ſo barely, and produce neuer ſo manifeſt reaſons of great importance to moue all able men vnto compaſſion, yet conſidering their preſent want is ſo much, and the meanes ſo ſcant wherewith to releéue them, with the time ſo long till God ſend new ſtore (the ware corne ſeed in the moſt cold countreyes being yet vnſowen) which threatneth a further famin to follow, without due prouiſion now in time: Let vs then conſider of this maine point. All in vaine hitherto, if this preſent penurie bee not prouided for.

1 How the want of the poore may be ſtill releéued.

Concerning the want of the poore, it may be ſupplyed two manner of waies. 1. How the poore may be releeued

1 Firſt by remouing the cauſe of their wants.

2 Second, by adding a further ſupply.

Concerning the cauſes of the poore (as hath bin plainely explaned before) the ſame doth proceéde partly from themſelues through their idlenes, &c. but more eſpecially from the poore makers, The double cauſe of the poores want.

The double cause of the poores want.

hers (whereof there be sundrie sorts before named) who if they would surcease their immoderate excesse (as hath beene moued by many sounde reasons) the poore would gette daily releefe thereby. For, as it is a tried rule in Phisicke, Take away the cause of any maladie, and the effect of curing will follow of it selfe: for as the one is in removing, the other is in comming, (the one as it were following the other) the like is the cause concerning the poore: for if the wastefull expences in their makers, (as it were all drawen out of their purses) were againe restored into the same, they should haue little cause to complaine, for both they should haue more store of money to buye what they neede, and vittels then would be more plentie.

The cause taken away the effect ceaseth.

Restraint of expences, a supply to the poore.

As for example, the very ouerplus of prodigal persons, ỹ misspent so much in bibbing & bellichéere, which breedeth diseases in thē: if that were spared héereafter in al places, how many thousands throughout al Englād might be wel releeued, it would be incredible, séeing euery towne will afford some such vnthrifts.

How many thousands might bee supplied.

The like may be saide of all other sorts of excessiue persons, that if they were drawen to due moderation, and their ouerplus conuerted to the vse of the poore: it would appeare by computation that maintenance enough might be had for almost innumerable poore persons, if corne should beare the double price in all markets.

Prouision of corne brought in frō beyond the Seas.

Touching the second point, which is the procuring of supply in corne from other countreyes, that care hath hitherto manifested it selfe in her gracious Maiestie and most honourable Councell (as the great aboundance of white rie brought into England from beyond the seas, doth demonstrate, the Lorde grant it may hold out still.

3 Cheese point to consider rightly of the poore.

The poore mans want, and meanes to supply, being thus far reuealed, let vs now proceed to the second cheefe point concerning the poore (what persons indeede consider rightly of them) that is in few words, all those men of substance that suffer no able workmā or woman to want work or wages to liue on this deere yeere, nor any of their impotent neighbors to be vnrelee-

ued

ned (so much as they may) and those that doo sée the youth set on worke, & al able persons that are vnwilling, or els do punish thē as the law appointeth, these do indéed performe the same accordingly, to the good example of all other persons.

4. Cheefe point to produce some examples of poore considerers, ten in number.

The fourth cheefe point concerning the poore, is to produce some speciall examples, of such as kept good hospitalitie, or otherwise vsed to releeue the poore, which shall stand as patterns to all posterities, of liberall considerers of the poore, contained within the canonicall scriptures, which are ten in number.

1. Abraham and Lot. *Gen.* 18. & 19.

The first example shall be a couple of brethren Abraham & Lot by name, who were so much giuen to hospitalitie, as scarce they wold suffer any poore traueller to passe by their doores, but did entertain thē liberally: a good example to great housekéepers

2. Nehemiah. *Nehe.* 5.

The seconds example is Nehemiah that noble gouernour, who finding the Iewes sore oppressed at his returne from Babilon, did not only remitte a part of his own right assigned vnto him, but also kept at his table daily an hundreth and fiftie of them, which before had béene banished amongst the heathen, and moued others to the like compassion: a woorthy president to all superiour gouernours.

3 Iob the iust. *Iob.* 29. & 31.

The third example, is Iob the iust, a wealthie man of the land of Husse, who was so pittifull vnto the poore, that he became the eyes to the blinde, the féete to the lame, and as a father vnto the fatherlesse, neuer denying the néedies request, nor being once wearie in supplying their wants: a notable patterne for all rich persons.

Dauid the king. *Psal.* 16. 23. & 37 25.

The fourth example, is Dauid the king, who toke such pleasure in prouiding well for all poore people (especially such as delighted in godlinesse) that he would not suffer, neither euer did sée either them or their séede to begge in his dayes: a most famous president for all kings and princes.

5. Repenting Zacheus. *Luk.* 19. 1. 9.

The fift example, is repenting Zacheus, who sometimes had béene an extorting vsurer, yet when hee was truely conuerted by Christ, at the first offered the halfe of his goods to releeue the poore, and to restore foure folde to all

manner

manner persons whom he had pinched any kinde of way: a memorable patterne for al oppressing vsurers to follow in these dayes, if they would please God.

6. Dorcas. *Act.9.36.* 42.

The first example is one Dorcas, a notable woman, who was full of good workes, and charitable almes, giuing many gownes and coates to the poore, as was shewed by sundrie to Peter the Apostle: a most worthie patterne for Ladies and gentlewomen.

7. Captaine Cornelius. *Act.10.1.* 5.

The seauenth example is Cornelius the captaine, a very religious deuout man, fearing God greatly, and alwaies bountifull in bestowing almes: a rare example for Captaines to follow.

8. Able christians in the primitiue church *Acts 3.& 4.*

The eight example, were the first Christians in the primitiue church (after Christs ascension) who were of so tender compassion in those daies, that rather then they would see their brethren to begge and discredit their profession, those that had possessions willingly solde them to supply their wants, which stood in neede, and so brought their money to the Apostles, to deuide the same accordingly. A forcible patterne to perswade able men to be liberall releeuers of the poore.

9. The citizens of Corinth. *Rom.15.20 2.cor.8.ch. Philip.4. 15.18.*

The ninth example, the godly Cittizens of Corinth of Philippi, and other places, who were not onely willing to releeue their neighbours, but in the time of scarcitie in other countreyes, did freely bestow their almes in money (aboue their abilitie) and sent the same to supply theyr wants that were conuerted and become Christians. Most worthy examples to moue able Citizens at the least, to haue speciall care this deere yeare, to releeue theyr needie neighbours.

10. Our Sauiour Christ. *2.Cor.8.9 Philip.2. ch*

The tenth and most worthy example of all is our Lord and Sauiour Iesus Christ, who was so replenished with the bowels of compassion to releeue our estate in great perplexitie, that rather then we should be vtterly lost (though he were Lorde of heauen and earth) yet willingly (as it were) renounced his right, and abased himselfe to the very lowest degree of a seruant, for our sakes and safetie (beeing his seruants) that wee might

might be endued with all his blessings, and made heires with him of his celestial kingdome. A perfit president of that compassion, which all true Christians should seeke to imitate towards the distressed, so much as we may. *Rom.8.*

If none of the former alledged examples, can preuaile with vs, to part with any portion towardes the sustentation of our needie neighbors, yet if we will not shew our selues past grace, our Sauiours example wil procure the same from vs, and that in bountifull measure. For, shall he willingly spoyle himselfe to pay our debts, when we were vnable to discharge the same: and shall we be vnwilling to giue some part of that plentie he hath giuen vs, vpon our needie neighbor for his sake? God forbid. If the speeches of Iohn the Apostle be true, That we ought to lay downe our liues for our brethren, (after Christs example): as no man can deny the same that hath grace in him. Then much more ought we to releeue their want with some of our wealth. O then, seeing their case at this instant is very lamentable for lack of reliefe, let vs not shut our compassion from them, like the hard hearted Priest and Leuite, but let vs resemble the kind Samaritan, that neuer left helping the wounded man, till he was restored again to health: euen so should we do vnto the poore, if we would approue our selues kind Christians. Our sauiours example of force. *Coll.2.13. 14 15.* *1.Ioh.3.16.* Marke this diligently. *Luk.20. 30 37.*

The fift chiefe point concerning the poore, is, to search out the double effect that will follow the due considering of them. First, their great want shall be well relieued: and their Releeuers (in what degree so euer,) approue themselues to be those true Christians in whom the Lord delighteth, both of them redounding to further his glory.

The first chiefe point concerning the poore, Is, to consider of their dangerous estate, that do not seeke daily to helpe their supply (being now so needfull) and they well able, who stand all in danger of endles destruction, to be damned with Diues (as you heard before. All which inducements (and specially this last) should draw on all able men, (and namely the poore-makers) to become more liberall in releeuing their want, for if such simply *Luk.16.*

The poore makers estate dangerous. *Mat.25.*

as do not supply them, be in daunger of damnation (as Christ himself witnesseth) then how can the poore-makers escape most fearefull plagues, except they in this life make restitution, which grace God graunt them.

The almes giuers title blessed. *Mat.5.7.*

Now let vs proceed to consider of that title which the Prophet heere ascribeth to all such persons as duly consider of the poore, whom he truly tearmeth to be blessed, which is confirmed by the Lord Iesus, where he saith, The mercifull are blessed: which importeth thus much in fewe words, that such a person is In Gods fauour, and so known to others: which is the greatest honour that any of his seruaunts can attaine vnto in this life, as we commonly call him, A happie man.

The courtiers phrase *Mat.25.*

For, as Courtiers vse when one is aduanced, to terme such a person in high estimation with his Prince, and as the speech runneth, Well graced of all men: so the case standeth with all good almes giuers, especially such as rightly giue the same, that they are not only blessed with Christ, for whose sake chiefly they bestow the same, but so accounted of all his seruants, which is the highest title that Dauid a King, doth vsually ascribe vnto any of the Chosen, and ought so much the more to moue vs to mercy, to pittie the poore, and relæue their misery, for that we shall not only approue our selues thereby, blessed of God, but to resemble him our heauenly Father, which should the more enlarge our compassion towards the needie. *Luk.6. 36.*

An obiection.

By this occasion, the poore may obiect, If such persons only as consider of our estate, be accounted blessed, then it may seem that we are accursed.

Answered.

To this may be answered, That Dauid doth not say, Hee that considereth of the poore (is onely blessed,) But that (He is blessed) setting a marke as it were on such a man, (That he is blessed of God) to incourage others to follow his example in helping ỹ poore, that they may so shew themselues blessed also.

Both sorts blessed. *Math.5. 3.6.10.*

Note that Dauid excludeth not the poore frõ being blessed also, (especially such as be poore in spirite, and meekly beare their appointed burthen) for well he knew that such are blessed also, as

Christ

Christ reporteth of them.

By the which rule, euery poore person may truly try, whether he be blessed of God, or no: for if any of them grudge at their low estate, or vse words or gesture shewing discontent, or any vnlawfull meanes to better the same, then they are in danger of Gods displeasure: but if they meekely beare his burthen laid vpon them, do neither inwardly nor outwardly murmure at the same, nor vse indirect meanes to better their estate, but patiently wayt the Lords will in all things, then assuredly they are blessed of God, as well as their releeuers. How the poore may trie if they be blessed.

But an other question may hereupon arise, whether all the poore releeuers be blessed or no? A question.

The answere is easie, That all releeuers of the poore are not blessed, (howsoeuer the world do account of them,) as ỹ proud Pharisie will approue who was reiected (notwithstanding his good workes,) because he abused them to Gods dishonour. Answered. *Luc.* 18.

By whose example, we are to learne thus much, That it is not alwayes a certaine signe of a blessed man, to be liberal in good workes or giuing of almes, (except other circumstances be therewith considered,) which I will comprize vnder these fiue kindes. Fiue circumstances of acceptable almes

1 That the giuer thereof, be the seruant of Christ.
2 That he giue it simply for his sake.
3 That he be in charitie with all persons.
4 That he giue it in compassion, without vain-glory.
5 That he do not boast thereof afterwards.
6 That he do not seeke to merit thereby.

All which Circumstances are to be obserued in giuing of almes, if the partie seeke to please God thereby, for he that fayleth in any one point, cannot assure himselfe to blessed.

For, touching the first, it is very manifest, that as the branch cannot bring forth frute, except it be, and abide in the vine, no more can any person liuing please God, except hee be and abide in Christ, and so become his obedient and faithfull seruant, as himself witnesseth: wherby all Infidels are abandoned *Ioh.* 15.

with their almes, because they are not the members of Christ.

The second circumstance to be considered, Is, that we giue our almes simply for Christes sake onely, to helpe and relieue his needie members (without any other sinister respect) for so hath he commaunded, (as before is shewed) neither may we do otherwise, if we consider the goods we haue are his, to vse to his glory, and that we must one day make account of them.

*Luk.12.* *Mat.25.* *Luk.16.*

The third circumstance, Is, that we be in charitie with all maner persons, when we giue our almes. For, (as the Apostle truly affirmeth) if we should giue away all that we haue to the vse of the poore, and our bodies besides to be burned to ashes, yet should all be lost, (except we both liue and die in charitie) for God is charitie, and he that liueth in charitie, dwelleth in God, and none but such persons.

*1.Cor.13.* *1.Ioh.4.16*

The fourth circumstance, is, That we giue our almes freely in compassion, (without all vainglory) for, although the Pharises were liberall in almes, yet because they did all to be seene of men, and recommended by them, they lost their reward at the hands of God. Therefore Christ teacheth all his Disciples, (so much as is possible) not to let their left hand know in these cases, what the right hand doth: so will God one day reueale it to their comfort.

*Mat.6.3. 4.*

The fift circumstance, is, That when we giue our almes, we may not vse to boast thereof afterwards, as the proud Pharisie did, that he had giuen so much, and others so little, least we lose our labour as he did, (who was reiected (not for his almes) but for his vnlawfull bragging of the same.

*Luk.18.*

The sixt circumstance, is, To take heed in any case that we do not seeke to merit by our almes, least we exclude our selues from Gods mercy, whereby alone the elect are redeemed in Christ Iesus. But when we haue done the best that we can, humbly to confesse (as he hath taught vs,) That we are all vnprofitable seruants) so farre should we be, from seeking at all to merite thereby.

*Iob.3.* *Luk.17.10*

If the Papists and others would thinke of these points, that

make

make so much vaunting of their almes giuing, they should be soone rid of two bad opinions, both touching the maner and end of their almes. For, (as the Apostle saith,) If the perfect law of God could not bring vs life, (because we wanted power to performe it) shall we once imagine to merit an higher place in heauen, by our imperfit good workes, (the best wherof are polluted with sin, as before is shewed): it is impossible. *Gal.3.* *Eph.2*

Neither let the Papists vntruly reproach vs, that we deny good workes, or deedes of charitie, for (as they may perceiue by that which hath bin said) we vrge them to all Christians, vpon paine of damnation to those that refuse them, because they cannot without them approue themselues to be true beleeuers, and without faith no man can please God, yet we do not put them in Christs place, as the cause or matter of our saluation, but as effects only proceeding from faith, whereby we make it manifest, that we do belong vnto his redemption, because we desire in all things to please him. *Iam.2.* *Hebr.11.* *Luk.1.74*

Now are we come by course to consider of that assured benefit which he shall reape, that is, rich in good workes, and giuing of almes, which is set downe in this sentence following, The Lord will deliuer him in the time of his trouble. Wherin wee are to note (as before is remembred) these two speciall points.

1 His safe protection, That God will deliuer him.
2 The time when, In the dayes of his distresse.

Concerning the former point, The Lord will deliuer him, who hath compassion on his needie neighbour. Oh how strong a motiue must this needs be, to moue all good Christians to that worke of mercy (namely if we consider these two points.)

1 Who the Lord our protector is.
2 How many and great our daungers are,

Touching the former, If we either cast vp our eyes to the heauens, or conceiue his goodnesse to all his creatures, how he created, nourisheth, preserueth & guideth them, by his Almightie power and prouidence, to serue our vse, and to set forth his *Psal.19.1.6*

glorie, we should then knowe who the Lord our protector is. But if we loke inwardly with the eyes of fayth, into his most holy and immortall wordes, which he hath left amongst vs, to instruct vs further of his power and goodnesse, how hee created all things of nothing, and that with a worde (without other instrument) and how he caused the sea to giue place, for the safetie of his seruants, and after to returne and swallow vp their enemies. Then shall we behold the power of that God who is our protector.

Gods power manifested. *Gen.* 1.

*Exod.* 14.

But, which surpasseth all the former testimonies of the Lords powerfulnesse, as farre as heauenly things exceede all earthly things, if we rightly consider of our own wofull estate and condition, how (through the fall of our first ancestors) all we they posteritie, were not only depriued of his protection, but became bondslaues to sinne and Satan, without recouerie (as of our selues) or any cause in vs to moue the Lords mercie, to redeeme vs all from their intollerable thraldome and tyrannie, saue onely our miserie, we being all ranke rebels against him, by our continuall practice.

The Lords powerfulnesse most of al appearing in our redemption. *Ephes.* 2.

Behold, notwithstanding, the goodnesse & greatnesse of Gods loue and powerfulnesse, for our restauration into his lost fauor, appearing most of al in sending his only begotten sonne Iesus, the very iewell and heire apparant of heauen and earth, to take vpon his person our weake and frails nature, and therein to incounter with sinne and Satan, and all their partakers, whom he in his manhode so mightily confounded, that he led away captiuitie captiue, & triumpheth ouer them in eternall victorie, and all for our sakes, to bring vs to felicitie. Oh then how safe are we, that haue this almightie God, for our protector?

The power of Christ Iesus in our weake nature. 1. *Cor.* 15. *Colloss.* 2.

To come to the latter point, how many and great our daungers are, may be considered in these three respects.

Three kinds of danger.

1 The malice of our enemies, how many and mightie.
2 The perils we stand in, how great and variable.
3 Our dayly sinnes, how many and monstrous.

All which approue the prouidence of God to be the more

powerfull

powerfull in our protection, notwithstanding.

Concerning our enemies, for those that are outward, whom we tearme bodily, I refer them to euery mans consideration, how they are any way vered by them, and onely will nominate those that be ghostly, which seeke the subuersion of our soules and bodies, in eternall confusion, who are tearmed in scripture, diuels and damned spirits, which are innumerable, and withall so mightie & malicious, that if God did not restraine their rage against vs, we should be destroyed all in one moment. 1. Our enemies: Bodily: Ghostly. 1. *Pet.* 5. 8.

Touching those perils we dayly stand in, they may be considered by others destruction. 2 Our perils.

Some by stormes and tempests.
Some by fearefull fires.
Some by flowing waters.
Some by sores and sickenesse.
Some by dearth and famine.
Some by warres and battels.

With a number such like, whereunto we are subiect, and should incurre them without Gods protection.

To come to our sins, which may be tearmed the very hooke which pulleth these daungers dayly vppon vs, how many and monstrous they are in Gods sight, (especially our pride, excesse, and extortion) may partly appeare in their particulars before touched, but are made much more manifest, by the Lords plaguing vs at this present with scarcitie and penurie in most places, so as the poorer sort are like to perish, without better prouision. 3. Our sins.

Thus farre hauing shewed the daungers wee stand in, let vs nowe more precisely poynt out the time when God will deliuer all those persons, that are founde carefull to relieue the poore: that is to say, in the dayes of their trouble: So that they faile not to call vppon the almightie Lord: for so himselfe sayeth, Call vppon mee in the dayes of thy trouble, and I will deliuer thee, &c. 2 The time when God wil deliuer his. *Psal.* 50. 15.

Two points

Where-

Whereby we may learne these two chiefe points.

1 When and from what troubles the Lord wil deliuer vs.

2 How we may be sure and certainly know, that God will deliuer vs.

1 Touching the former, whē and from what troubles God wil deliuer vs: that is to say, when we our selues are in any danger, either of inward or outward enemies, or otherwise, by water, by fire, by tempests, by sickneſſe, by famine, or such like: and then (especially) when we are in extremitie, and in daunger to die, the Lord wil either send present remedie, or else take vs vnto his mercy, and make vs partakers of his felicitie, for euermore to magnifie his great name.

2 The meanes how to know that God will deliuer vs from all extremities, is, by our constant calling on his name, with faith and firme hope that he will deliuer vs, which in the ende wil preuaile with his maiestie, to deale with vs gratiously, and send vs supply, as he knoweth most to further his glory.

*Iam.5.16. 17,18.*

To conclude therfore, seeing at this present the hand of God is heauy vpon vs, in most places of this Realme of England, appearing plainly in this great penury, amongst the poorer sort especially, and threatned further in greater measure, by seuerall signes from heauen, by strange diseases on earth, and by forraigne inuasion of deuoted enemies, our sinnes most of all prouoking the same, which wil in the end procure our desolation, without spedie conuersion, which we can neuer attaine vnto, (what meanes soeuer be vsed for the same) without Gods especiall grace and direction, which must be obteined by earnest petition: Let vs all then incessantly, aske, knocke, seeke and sue for the same continually, at the footestoole of his mercy, in the name and mediation of Christ Iesus onely, with assurance to speed, so shall we not only remoue his displeasure, but be assured to procure his fauour, for euermore: So be it.

Faithfull prayer, a speciall meanes to preuaile with God, which was neuer more needfull.

FINIS.